



VERMONT VETERANS' HOME

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2019

# The BUZZ WORD

## THANK YOU FOR CARING:

When someone takes the time to listen,  
When someone reaches out,  
When someone does a thoughtful thing  
That makes you warm throughout.

When someone lends a helping hand,  
Finds ways in which to share,  
When someone makes you feel secure  
By always being there.

When someone senses there are times  
When you have special needs,  
When someone gives you inner strength  
Through words as well as deeds.

When someone seems to take an interest  
In just how you're faring,  
It's time to tell that special someone  
Thanks so much for caring!



Rodney presented LNA Giselle Albrecht with a “Caring Pin”,.

Our Staff make a difference in the lives of those we care for and the Caring Pin  
is one way of rewarding them. *P. Crossman*



VERMONT VETERANS' HOME

*Fulfilling the Promise*

**The Vermont Veterans' Home was established in Bennington in 1884. It is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor. The VVH offers a complete range of specialized care services for its residents. VVH goals focus on insuring the dignity, independence, and the highest possible care and quality of life for each resident.**

**VVH is licensed to meet all levels of care for its residents and the VVH's departments and staff work together to provide those levels of care.**

*For any Further Questions Please Contact:*

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**robyn.boland@vermont.gov**  
**802-447-6523**



<http://vvh.vermont.gov>

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*From the Administrator... Melissa Jackson*



Now that the holiday season is over my attention turns to a crucial "season" at VVH, one we affectionately refer to as "Budget Season." In a few short weeks Al, Steve, and I will be traveling to the State House to provide testimony on the facility's operating budget for the Fiscal Year 2020 (July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2021).

This year will be my 8<sup>th</sup> trip to Montpelier to provide budget testimony and each year it seems to be just a little more difficult for the Legislature to understand the importance of the Home. Despite explaining, repeatedly, who we care for and the importance of the mission of the Home, there are those who do not understand why Vermont should have a role in caring for our Veterans.

Veterans and their families rarely brag or boast about their service to their country, and they are very humble. I would say almost too humble, remember I am a Navy Wife. Now more than ever it is time to be boastful and brag about what it means to be a Veteran in Vermont.

It is essential that all members of the legislature hear from Veterans and their family members, not just those residing at VVH, but those from across the State of Vermont. Call and email your legislator, tell them why VVH is vital to you and the Veterans you know. No one's life goals include going to a nursing home or needing short-term rehab after an illness or surgery, but it is nice to know that VVH will be here if you or your loved one needs those services.

Contact information for all of Vermont's Legislators can be found at:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/>

Thank you for your continued support of the Home and for helping us to "Fulfill the Promise.

*Melissa*

*Melissa A. Jackson, BSW, LNHA  
Chief Executive Officer  
[www.vvh.vermont.gov](http://www.vvh.vermont.gov)*

### **Housekeeping and Laundry**

We ask that you have all clothing labeled by nursing so that we may be able to return it to the correct owner. Without proper identification, staff spends hours trying to determine the owners of the garments.



We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.  
Housekeeping and Laundry Staff.

# Turkey Trot



The Board of Trustees expressed their appreciation to the dedicated and exemplary Staff of the Veterans' Home by presenting each employee with a Christmas turkey.

Board members seated: (L-R) Art Charron, Mike diMonda and Joe Krawczyk. Jamie Percy, Trustee, also helps with the distribution.



## CONGRATULATIONS BRANDON BOULEVARD

Allison Fleming, Unit Manager on Brandon, accepts the trophy from Melissa Jackson and Patricia Crossman as Falls Prevention Champions for 2018.



(R) Staff members Stacy, Melinda and Desiree help celebrate the accomplishment of the team by holding the award



**On behalf of the Veterans/Members, we sincerely thank the following for their generous donations.**

Hildegard Film  
Fair Haven Eagle Riders #3907  
VFW Post 798 Ladies Auxiliary Newport  
American Legion Post #9 Randolph  
Bennington Lions Club  
Hersam Acorn Newspaper, LLC  
Phyllis & Rhonda Roberts  
Pownal American Legion Auxiliary-Unit 90  
VFW Post 1332 Bennington  
DAV Auxiliary, Bennington Chapter #4  
VFW District #4, Milton VT  
Helping Hands Shop  
April Erwinski  
American Legion Aux Post 13 Bennington  
VFW Auxiliary Barre  
Karen Ranttila  
Edward Dewey and Family  
Manchester VFW  
Springfield Middle School  
Bennington Rotary Club  
Emma Fraize - Girl Scouts  
Kelly Endres - Girl Scouts  
Boy Scouts of America Bennington  
Grace Christian School  
The Trafton Family  
Wallace Mattison & Family  
Curtis Cassano  
Order of the Eastern Star #41 Arlington  
Church Insurance Company of VT  
VFW Post #771 Pawlet  
American Legion Post 84 White River Jct  
Steven Senecal and Family  
Helen Rodgers  
Linda Pierce  
Cherie Guile  
Ralph & Sheila Becker  
The Fowler Family  
Brian Johansen and Family

**In Memory of William Praetorius**

Kathleen Praetorius

**In Memory of Robert Rice**

David & Dorothy Howe

Carolyn Bobowiec

**In Memory of Eugene Oler**

Sieglinde Sherman

**In Memory of William Basso**

Eveleth Basso

Thank you  
American Legion Post 13  
for your  
generous donation towards  
Wreaths Across America

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**Events**

**February—Valentine's Day Dance**

1:30 in Patriot Hall

Music provided by Harmonic Duo

**12 February—Music with Sheila**

1:30 in Patriot Hall

**17 March Air Force Ensemble**

2:00 in Patriot Hall

**24 March—Las Vegas Day**

1:30 in Patriot Hall

Sponsored by the Bennington Elks #567



*From Deputy Administrator—Colonel Al Faxon*

I was recently reading an article on the Vietnam War. It included pictures, captions, and comments on the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Vietnam. Seeing the pictures and reading the observations invariably made me think of our Veterans who live in the Vermont Veterans' Home. The pictures were captivating, seemingly accurately describing a part of Vietnam that several of you warriors are very familiar with.



Amazingly Vietnam has a vibrant economy today and this economy is bustling because the Vietnamese people learned what freedom is from you! They learned that diligent effort, and good old hard work can make you self-sufficient. They learned this from the stories you told about back home in America and by the determination you showed during the war.

Through your military service, you have participated in defending freedom both here and around the globe. It is important that you realize your efforts and unselfishness continue to reap benefits, and positively impact the countries you served in. S/F

Thanks for stepping up! AF

**INFECTION CONTROL**

**“WHY I TAKE VACCINES”**

**DR. PETER KING**



My grandchildren and family, my patients, my coworkers, my community.

From an infectious disease standpoint, we live in a different world than just 100 years ago, even 50 years ago. Wander through a cemetery and notice the number of graves for children from this era. Many families could expect to lose a child, sibling, or parent to a disease that we now consider vaccine preventable. Many others would experience life-long caregiving for a relative who had experienced devastating and disabling complications from an infectious disease, such as encephalitis from measles or pertussis (whooping cough), congenital rubella syndrome from experiencing German measles during pregnancy, or paralysis from poliovirus infection.

Today, these complications seem as remote as winning the lottery. Few of us experience any contact with the consequences of declining acceptance of vaccinations. But witness the recent multiple outbreaks of measles since it was declared eliminated from the US in 2000, widespread pertussis outbreaks, and 80,000 deaths from influenza during the 2017-2018 influenza season and we see a reminder of the effectiveness of vaccines when people choose to decline them. Underuse of vaccines has been demonstrated to play a role in these outbreaks.

I know that the ability of vaccines to protect my family and community, including Arthur and Declan sitting in my lap above, vastly overshadows any remote risk of immunization. That makes my decision to roll up my sleeve much easier.

## THE BUZZ WORD

Three ways for you to receive the Vermont Veterans' Home monthly newsletter:

- ♦ Vermont Veterans' Home website:  
[www.vvh.vermont.gov](http://www.vvh.vermont.gov)  
Click on About Our Home  
Click on Newsletters
- ♦ Email
- ♦ Mailing List

To be added to our lists please contact:

The Buzz Word  
Vermont Veterans' Home  
325 North Street  
Bennington, VT 05201  
Anne Baruzzi  
(802) 447-6510  
Email: [anne.baruzzi@vermont.gov](mailto:anne.baruzzi@vermont.gov)

## VVH WISH LIST

Mittens  
Pinball Machine/Game  
Neck Pillows      Body Pillows  
I-Pods & I-Tune Cards   or   CD Players  
Newspaper Subscriptions  
Costume Jewelry   or   Stamps  
(New) Men's Belts and Suspenders  
Earphones for TV and Music  
Outdoor Benches

**Your donations are gratefully accepted.**

**Please make check for monetary donations out to Vermont Veterans' Home:**

Vermont Veterans' Home  
Business Office  
325 North Street  
Bennington, VT 05201

**THANK YOU**

We are looking for people with music talent and or special talents of any kind who would like to give time to our veteran's and members on our special care unit. Please contact Michele Burgess at [michele.burgess@vermont.gov](mailto:michele.burgess@vermont.gov) or call 802-447-6520.

*Honoring  
Those Who Have  
Served*

## DONATION INFORMATION

Your donations are gratefully accepted. Please make check out to Vermont Veterans' Home:

**Vermont Veterans' Home  
Business Office  
325 North Street  
Bennington, VT 05201**

Please indicate to which fund(s) you are donating:

### Members Assistance:

Directly to Veterans/Members  
Furniture, Haircuts, Clothing  
Other personal needs

### Namaste Program Fund:

Oils for relaxation  
Supplies, Equipment

### Unrestricted Fund:

Facility equipment  
Large purchase

### Activities Fund:

Entertainment

### Music & Memory Fund:

iPods, Headphones, iTunes cards

### NEW: Veteran's Mobility Trail

Monetary donations toward  
a paved walkway around  
the perimeter of the VVH

PLEASE NOTE:

**\*\* We will NOT BE ACCEPTING books, magazines, VCR tapes or clothing at this time. THANK YOU to all who have donated to our Veterans at VVH.**

## TWIG REMEMBERS...Sweeney, Joe

When Joe and Mary Sweeney took over the Fair Haven Inn in the late 1960's, it was like St. Patrick had put his Irish blessing on it. They brought in a pinball machine, a real shuffleboard machine and a player piano. That meant pinball teams, membership, a 2-state/4 town shuffleboard league and a twice-a-week sing-alongs with the player piano.

It was St. Patrick's Day. Everybody was Irish; even big George Vladyka was wearing two shades of green and having a feast.

What a bunch of characters were the regular clientele telling these old tales of some ole gal named Sagawan and a spry and rye old ladies' man named Squat-Ma Johnson—nicknames were big, so don't do something out of the ordinary or they'd tag you.

One night the Sweeneys returned from a class reunion and the tag "Sweeney, Joe" was still on his jacket. Now Charles Ballioux was a simple little guy who never had a chance, born about 4 feet short, bow legged, knock kneed and at this point not a tooth in his head. He picked up on it and wouldn't let it go. Some of the others tried it for a while but were too cool because it didn't come from them. I liked it, I like how it started and really like the little guy that started it all.

The Sweeneys sold the Inn and moved to Manchester, NH and took good executive positions with the U.S. Post Office distribution center. I hadn't seen them in over ten years and there, coming across Washington Street, I holler "Sweeney, Joe". Oh, we had a great hug and remembrance session.

Every single time I've been in the hospital, I always get a card and if I'm in for any length-visits, and I always greet him "Sweeney, Joe". You know, you think about outside influence in the bar business-it would be Joe and Mary Sweeney. And if you are talking about outside influence in the restaurant business, that would be the Lemnotis family bringing Greek cuisine—both at the Fair Haven Inn.

It's so true—Every simple little person has something to offer in this huge, wonderful world we live in...even little Charlie Ballioux.

God bless "Sweeney, Joe" and thanks for all those good times, good laughs and great memories.

You get what I mean... "Twig Remembers"



Robert "Twig" Canfield

**FRIENDS —  
THEY MAKE YOU  
LAUGH A LITTLE LOUDER,  
SMILE A LITTLE BRIGHTER  
LIVE A LITTLE BETTER**



## The Same Boiling Water that Softens the Potato Hardens the Egg

Once upon a time a daughter complained to her father that her life was miserable and that she didn't know how she was going to make it. She was tired of fighting and struggling all the time. It seemed just as one problem was solved, another one soon followed.

Her father, a chef, took her to the kitchen. He filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Once the three pots began to boil, he placed potatoes in one pot, eggs in the second pot and ground coffee beans in the third pot. He then let them sit and boil, without saying a word to his daughter.

The daughter, moaned and impatiently waited, wondering what he was doing. After twenty minutes he turned off the burners.

He took the potatoes out of the pot and placed them in a bowl. He pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. He then ladled the coffee out and placed it in a cup.

Turning to her, he asked. ***"Daughter, what do you see?"***

***"Potatoes, eggs and coffee,"*** she hastily replied.

***"Look closer"*** he said, ***"and touch the potatoes."*** She did and noted that they were soft.

He then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg.

Finally, he asked her to sip the coffee. Its rich aroma brought a smile to her face.

***"Father, what does this mean?"*** she asked.

He then explained that the potatoes, the eggs and coffee beans had each faced the same adversity-the boiling water. However, each one reacted differently. The potato went in strong, hard and unrelenting, but in boiling water, it became soft and weak.

The egg was fragile, with the thin outer shell protecting its liquid interior until it was put in the boiling water. Then the inside of the egg became hard.

However, the ground coffee beans were unique. After they were exposed to the boiling water, they changed the water and created something new.

***"Which one are you?"*** he asked his daughter. ***"When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a potato, an egg, or a coffee bean?"***

### Moral of the story:

In life, things happen around us, things happen to us, but the only thing that truly matters is how you choose to react to it and what you make out of it. Life is all about leaning, adopting and converting all the struggles that we experience into something positive.



Al and Melissa accept a generous donation from Dawn Russ, a representative from the Berkshire Bank and Senior Crimestoppers.

The Berkshire Bank is a proud supporter of Senior Crimestoppers and chose the Vermont Veterans' Home to be the site of their funding this year.

# SPOT LIGHT ON VVH STAFF

Staff of the Vermont Veterans' Home were recognized for their years of service. With Gary DeGasta, Board Vice President and Melissa Jackson, CEO



Michele Burgess, Therapeutic Activities Director, 42 years



Jamie Percy, Environmental Services, 29 Years



Kelly Brown, Activities 29 years



Christina Cosgrove, Social Services Chief & Director of Admissions-20 years



Cindy Rankin, Nutritional Supervisor 10 years



Gary Yelle, Director of Marketing 5 years



Linda Shultz  
LNA 5 years

*Thank You!*



On behalf of the Bennington Lions Club, Henry Simpatico gives a Christmas check to Melissa



Wallace Mattison and his daughter donated gifts for Residents to Al and Melissa



Amy Maroney of Church Insurance Company of VT gives Melissa a donation

## CONGRATULATIONS



### NILES CALLANAN

Niles Callanan of Callanan Currier Service, has been taking our Veterans and Members to appointments for many years and it is not unusual to make a quick stop at McDonalds, Burger King or Dunkin Donuts on the way back.

Niles has also sponsored summer cook outs and winter goulash sales donating all the food and giving the proceeds directly to the Residents Council. When he is able, he also does a little shopping for our residents in between his daily transports.

On behalf of the Residents Council, President Richard Vachon presented a plaque to Niles in appreciation of his dedication to the Veterans and Members of the Home.

The Board of Trustees Vice President, Gary DeGasta and Melissa Jackson gave Niles a Challenge Coin which acknowledges his efforts which go above and beyond normal expectations.



Millie Harrington of Bennington became the first female King of the Hill (Queen?) at Mid Town Bowl when she beat Cy Leno of Arlington 370 (three strings) to 344 (three strings). Leno had bowled a 620 in the elimination round and Mrs. Harrington rolled a 619. Mrs. Harrington bowls in two leagues and has a 100 average. She won a cash prize. Leno bowls in two leagues also and has a 106 average.

### Millie Harrington Candle Pin Bowling Queen

## ADMINISTRATION SAYS:

**THANK YOU** with hot chocolate, hot cider and cookies to our staff who came out in the snowstorm or stayed extra hours to take care of our Veterans and Members.



## Show your Support at the VVH Apparel Store!

T-Shirts-\$15	Sweatshirts-\$25
Zip Hoodie-\$35	Sweatpants-\$20
Baseball Cap-\$20	Winter Hat-\$12
Scarf-\$12	Polo Shirts-\$25
Ornaments- \$8	VVH Pens-\$3
Small Totes- \$15	Large Totes-\$20
Wind Breakers: Unlined-\$23-\$27	Lined—\$27-\$31